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ABSTRACT

A 3-year project (July 1, 1988 to June 30, 1991) aimed to improve the quality of guidance and counseling services delivered to secondary students eligible to attend the Metropolitan Center, and area vocational center serving students in a four-county area around Little Rock, Arkansas. The focus of the program was to provide supplementary services not available elsewhere in school and in the community. The program had the following objectives: (1) assist and enable students to make realistic educational and career decisions based on their aptitudes, interests, abilities, and values; (2) provide support for program entry and successful program completion; (3) assist students in successful transition to the next step while they are in high school and after graduation; (4) assist students with developing positive interpersonal skills; (5) develop and adopt sex fair counseling policies and practices; and (6) develop counseling policies and practices to help special needs students make the transition from school to work. Some of the positive outcomes of the program included the following: providing career experiences for more than 7,000 students who came to the center; developing a successful marketing plan and raising $5,000 for public relations activities; increasing counseling time spent in direct services to students from 76 percent to 95 percent; increasing the retention rate for the second year of the program despite the effect of strict educational standards that stress basic instead of vocational skills; increasing the number of students who make passing grades at Metropolitan; and providing access nontraditional students and students with disabilities. At the conclusion of the program, 90 percent of the students felt that the center helped them prepare for their future careers. (Appendixes include a list of career courses at the center, information on enrollment procedures, and a marketing plan.) (Author/KC)

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ED343997

Final Report

Improving the Delivery of Guidance and Counseling Services at Metropolitan Center

Conducted by

Little Rock School District
Metropolitan Vocational Technical Education Center
7701 Scott Hamilton Drive
Little Rock, Arkansas 72209
Martha Allen, Project Director

In Cooperation with
Vocational and Technical Education Division
Arkansas Department of Education
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

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PROJECT ABSTRACT

PROJECT TITLE: **Improving the Delivery of Guidance and Counseling Services at Metropolitan Center**

PROJECT DIRECTOR
AND ORGANIZATION: Martha Allen, Counselor
Metropolitan Vocational Technical Education Center
7701 Scott Hamilton Drive
Little Rock AR 72209

DURATION OF PROJECT: July 1, 1988 to June 30, 1991

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of the program has been to improve the quality of guidance and counseling services delivered to secondary students eligible to attend Metropolitan, an area vocational center serving students in a four-county area. The focus of the program is to provide supplementary services not available elsewhere in school and the community.

Funding for this program has been a combination of program improvement, sex equity, special needs and local funds. The program targets public and private school students. Adults are served on request.

APPROACH: The six objectives of the program are: 1. To assist and enable students to make realistic, educational and career decisions based on their aptitudes, interests, abilities and values; 2. To provide support for program entry and successful program completion; 3. To assist students in successful transition to the next step while they are in high school and after graduation; 4. To assist students with developing positive interpersonal skills; 5. To develop and adopt counseling policies, practices and materials that are not only sex fair but sex affirmative (designed to overcome the effects of past discrimination and bias); and 6. To develop and adopt counseling policies, practices and materials that would facilitate the transition for special needs students from school to work.

EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION: Some of the positive outcomes of the program include: providing career experiences for more than 7,000 students who visited Metropolitan; developing a successful Marketing Plan that included a fund raising campaign that raised $5,000 for public relations activities; increasing counselor time spent in direct services to students from 76% to 95%; increase in retention rate for the second year of a program despite the effect of strict educational standards that stress basic instead of vocational skills; increase in number of students who make passing grades at Metropolitan; and providing access to nontraditional and handicapped students in all vocational programs offered.

Introduction

Technology continually changes the world, redefining the curriculum of public schools and determining what our future lifestyles will be. Job duties and work activities tomorrow will be affected by changes in technology today. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics has been projecting occupational employment trends for 40 years. In addition, John Naisbitt, George Gallup and others also make forecasts about the future. Knowledge of these trends can help educators in preparing young people for the transition from school to the workplace. Even in the best of circumstances, the transition process presents many challenges.

Adolescents need career planning assistance

Counselors assist people in preparing successfully for the future. At the secondary school level, they deliver services to students that meet personal, social, educational and career/vocational needs. When asked about the people they rely on to give them accurate information about course options, high school students typically give their school counselor top billing. The counselor in study after study is the undisputed professional in career planning.

However, the caseloads of most high school counselors are so high that little opportunity for individual and small group guidance and counseling is available after crisis counseling, college and scholarship information and high school course planning are provided. Often students are unable to get the assistance they need at school to develop their career and life goals. Families, often preoccupied with other problems, may fail to provide adequate support and understanding to adolescents who need to explore options. Adolescents often may try unsuccessfully to help one another because they, too, are struggling with their own decisions. Adolescents need more help in planning their careers and their lives while they are still in school.

Educational standards restrict career exploration

The state of Arkansas, making sweeping reforms in education over the past few years, has placed a greater emphasis on reading, writing, communication and mathematics. This trend, while addressing the critical needs of a nation of children who do not possess basic skills, makes career planning even more difficult. In Little Rock School District, for example, there are only five available elective credits out of the 20 required for graduation. The elective credits offer valuable opportunities that help students explore possible careers, develop employability skills and make decisions about their future. As more emphasis is placed on required courses, there is less time for students to pursue career interests.

2. To provide support for program entry and successful program completion.

3. To assist students in successful transition to the next step while they are in high school and after graduation.

4. To assist students with developing positive interpersonal life skills.

5. To develop and adopt counseling policies, practices and materials that are not only sex fair but sex affirmative (designed to overcome the effects of past discrimination and bias.)

6. To develop and adopt counseling policies, practices and materials that would facilitate the transition for special needs students from school to work.

Procedures

The Metropolitan area center counselor program has been funded through a combination of program improvement, sex equity, special needs and local funds from July 1, 1988 through June 30, 1991. The program targets public and private school students eligible to attend Metropolitan in central Arkansas from Grant, Lonoke, Pulaski and Saline counties. In addition, adults are served on request.

Counselor Job Duties and Responsibilities

The counselor has a variety of job duties and responsibilities as outlined below.

*Serve as an advocate for students to insure that they receive an excellent and equitable educational experience.

*Make appropriate interventions in times of crisis.

*Make regular reports to administrators pointing out areas of concern and recommend changes to provide a more positive learning environment for students.

*Provide enrollment and financial aid information.

*Perform recruiting and admissions duties.

*Provide specialized vocational/career guidance and counseling services.

*Assist with student data collection, student followup and follow through activities.

*Maintain confidential student records.

*Assist with development of employability skills and employment sources.

*Assist with appropriate staff development and inservice activities at Metropolitan and the home schools.

*Network with other helping professionals and make referrals to agencies and organization when appropriate.

*Keep abreast of the latest technological, occupational and educational trends and continually improve counselor skills.

The responsibilities of the Metropolitan counselor are not limited to these areas and are flexible enough to meet the needs of individual students.

Calendar of Activities

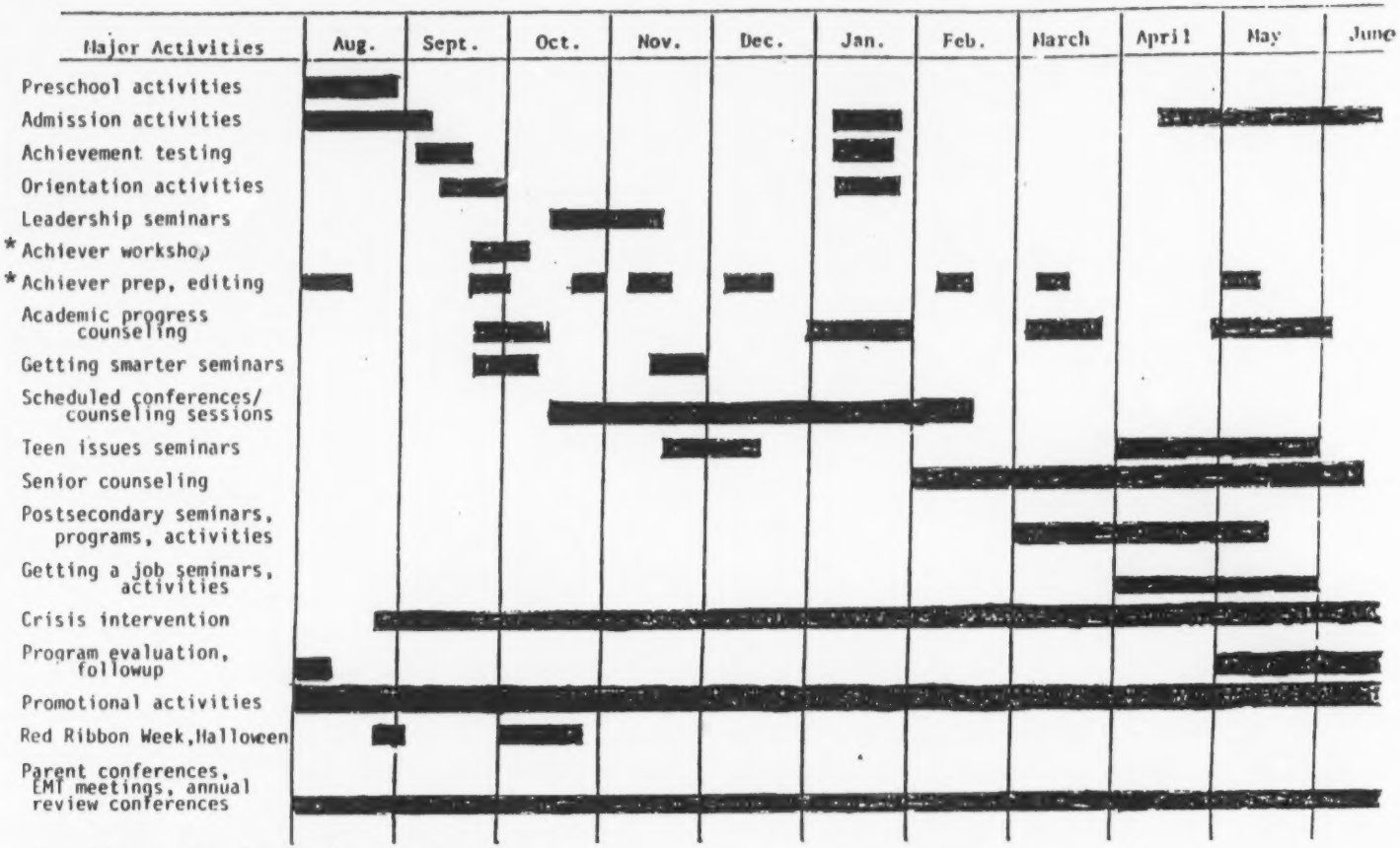
During the three years of the project, a calendar of counselor activitiesappropriate for each month has been developed. This calendar is provided to staff a Metropolitan and other home school counselors as requested.

The activities listed provide a framework for the counselor program and insure that staff and students are aware of the importance and need for a strong vocational/career guidance and counseling component at Metropolitan.

The staff and students assist in identifying those areas of need that should be addressed. During the time periods before the school year begins and after the school year ends, the staff meet to identify concerns and make plans for improving the educational program at Metropolitan. In addition, students are surveyed to determine their perceptions of the quality of the educational experiences they have received. This information is utilized in developing counselor activities for the year. See a sample copy of a calendar on the following page.

Guidance Curriculum Timetable

Metropolitan Vo-Tech Center



* Achiever is the student newspaper.

Matrix of Objectives, Strategies and Approaches

On the following pages a matrix of objectives, strategies and approaches has been provided. The procedures used during the project are outlined in more detail.

Each objective is stated with appropriate timelines, documentation and outcomes. The various strategies utilized to accomplish the objective are given along with accompanying explanations of the approach or procedures taken.

This matrix defines the details of the project so that others may replicate the procedures if appropriate for their particular educational needs.

OBJECTIVES	TIMELINES	DOCUMENTATION OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING OBJECTIVES	APPROACH OR PROCEDURES
To assist & enable students to make realistic, educational & career decisions based on their aptitudes, interests, abilities & values.	Ongoing	career development plans counselor records	Provide guidance & counseling at Metropolitan and assist counselors at feeder schools by attending conferences on request Assist in the development of career development plans based on student needs	Use a team approach. Staff & students must be involved whenever possible. Encourage parents to call & visit Metropolitan.
		posters, flyers, brochures	Develop quality recruiting materials that feature career interests of students & focus of preparation for future careers	
		counselor records	Schedule field trips for prospective students with orientation visits to plan a more meaningful experience	
		press releases, newspaper clippings	Provide information about student successes to school and local newspapers. Inform the district & Vocational Division Communications departments of activities of interest at Metropolitan.	Involve every staff member in the collection of "good news" items about students & the program.
		inservice meetings counselor course changes	Encourage teachers to meet the needs of students. If students have difficulty in programs, recommend modifications & perhaps course changes if needed.	Use inservice time as an opportunity to reinforce the importance of helping students prepare for the future. Not all needs are met by their particular program: a course change may be more appropriate.

OBJECTIVES	TIMELINES	DOCUMENTATION OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING OBJECTIVES	APPROACH OR PROCEDURES
To provide support for program entry & successful program completion.	Ongoing	Counselor records	Provide scheduling & orientation activities with individual & groups of students to insure that they know about the support services available to them	Counselor is the contact given on all admissions & recruiting materials. All inquiries are routed to counselor. All walk-ins are handled by counselor.
			Target students are identified at time of admission or during the first two weeks of school. These target students include: disadvantaged, handicapped, potential dropouts, substance abusers, emotional & discipline difficulties, health problems, single parents & pregnant teens, LES students, & overage students.	Much information is gathered in the spring when counselor & staff members visit feeder schools. As applications are received, teachers make personal contact with students. Information is shared with counselor at that time.
		Grades	The progress of students is monitored every four/five weeks. Interim reports are sent out in the middle of each nine weeks with copies given to counselor. Each student is contacted & appropriate instructional support is provided by the Vocational Evaluator/Coordinator. At nine weeks and semester, grades are reviewed. If necessary the IEP & IWVP are revised.	
	End of school year	Competency tests	At the end of each school year, the Vocational Division conducts student competency testing. This information is used for program improvement.	Information on student progress is sent back to Metropolitan & is compared with other data.

OBJECTIVES	TIMELINES	DOCUMENTATION OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING OBJECTIVES	APPROACH OR PROCEDURES
To assist students in successful transition to the next step while they are in high school & after graduation.	Ongoing	Counselor calendar of activities, materials	A variety of programs & activities are scheduled to enable students to make transition plans for the next step. Some of the timeframes are given below:	Groups of students are surveyed or interviewed to determine the kinds of information they want to receive & the preferred format.
	by Sept 30	"	Orientation activities-class visits to every classroom, office, counselor, Student Center, etc.	
	by Sept 30	"	Presentation of the Student Handbook & Rights/Responsibilities Handbook of the district	
	during first semester	"	Getting Smarter Seminars for those receiving their first interim report. Also, other presentations are scheduled on notetaking, test taking, study habits by individual teachers.	
	April/May	"	Tips on getting a summer job are shared with students. Interviewing & job application skills are developed in a workshop setting.	
	during second semester	Transition Plan	Handicapped students are provided with a vocational evaluation & seniors had a Transition Plan that focuses on referral to another educational or community agency	Parents are involved whenever possible in this process. Direct referral is made to the agency.

OBJECTIVES	TIMELINES	DOCUMENTATION OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING OBJECTIVES	APPROACH OR PROCEDURES
To assist students with developing positive interpersonal skills.	Ongoing	Counselor records	Schedule regular counseling sessions with target students & encourage others to meet regularly with the counselors.	Staff will always allow a student to visit with the counselor. They make out a pass without questioning the student.
	during second semester	calendar of activities, materials	Teen Issues Seminars are conducted on a variety of issues of interest to that particular year's student body. Some of the most successful programs that have continued year after year include: Financial Aid Workshops, AIDS Prevention, Suicide Prevention, Youth Accident Prevention Program, Drug Abuse,& Crisis Intervention	Staff & students are involved in the selection of topics. There are always more topics than time available for presentations.
	during first semester	school calendar	Students participate in their vocational club activities & receive leadership training provided by the Vocational Division.	
	Ongoing	Inservice documentation	A variety of inservice activities are planned to promote communication skills & build sensitivity to teen challenges. These are presented by the Vocational Division, district & at the building level. Improvement of interpersonal skills is a focus of the district's	
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Unfortunately, there is much time devoted to crisis intervention with adolescents. Referrals are made to other agencies as needed.	Parents & staff are involved in the crisis. In addition, we attempt to devise ways to prevent future incidents.

OBJECTIVES	TIMELINES	DOCUMENTATION OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING OBJECTIVES	APPROACH OR PROCEDURES
To develop & adopt counseling policies, practices & materials that are not only sex fair but sex affirmative.	Ongoing	Printed materials	Recruiting & admissions information contain a nondiscrimination statement. In addition, materials focus on needs and interests, not sex.	Involve students to get fresh ideas about what appeals to their interests and needs.
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Provide individual and group counseling for nontraditional students.	Meet with students on a regular basis.
	Ongoing	Counselor records Agendas	Coordinate presentations of positive role models in business and community to encourage students to develop their potential.	Ask for suggestions from students and staff.
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Enlist the help of other students to serve as peer tutors and helpers in classrooms.	
	Ongoing	Counselor records	To read professional literature, attend professional meetings and staff development activities that promote counselor insight and understanding.	Adapt activities and information for building level presentations for staff and students.
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Plan activities that educate others on the importance of sex fair and sex affirmative policies, practices and materials.	Use real examples whenever possible to make the presentations more adaptable to others.
	Ongoing	Purchased materials	Insure that the posters, books and materials used for guidance and counseling are sex fair.	Preview and return inappropriate materials which do not reflect today's multicultural, multi-ethnic life.

OBJECTIVES	TIMELINES	DOCUMENTATION OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING OBJECTIVES	APPROACH OR PROCEDURES
To develop & adopt counseling policies, practices & materials that would facilitate the transition for special needs students from school to work.	Ongoing	Counselor records	Plan recruiting activities that are directed toward special needs students. Use smaller groups and allow more time for informal questions.	Use the vocational teachers and resource teachers to identify students who might benefit from vocational programs.
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Encourage special needs students to visit Metropolitan prior to enrolling to determine the most appropriate placement.	
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Attend Educational Management Team meetings and annual review conferences to insure that students have appropriate access to programs.	
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Work cooperatively with vocational teachers on job readiness and employability skills. Use job tryouts and shadowing to help prepare special needs students for the next step.	
	Ongoing	Counselor records	Assist home school counselor with the Transition Plan that develops a long-term goal and different short-term goals that are needed for success in moving from student to worker.	Share information from Metropolian with home school counselor.
	Second semester	Counselor records	Work cooperatively with rehabilitation counselors and other referral agencies to insure that students have professionals to assist them after high school.	
	Second semester	Counselor records	Encourage students to return for additional support and assistance after they leave school. Each student receives a card with the counselor's office and home phone.	

Evaluation

The three-year program improvement project has provided the opportunity to improve and expand the vocational/career guidance and counseling services to students eligible to attend Metropolitan. There has been a great deal of cooperation from the Department of Education's Vocational Division staff in program improvement, sex equity and special needs. Program managers have provided inservice opportunities, leadership, support and monitoring during the project.

Needs Assessment

At the beginning of the project, a needs assessment was conducted by the counselor to identify critical problems affecting students attending Metropolitan. The results of the assessment indicated a need for the school to assist students in six areas. These areas are listed below in order of priority.

The student will:

*Develop employability skills

*Develop parental support and involve family and community in school activities and the educational goals of the school

*Prepare for independent living and develop an awareness and concern for social problems

*Learn techniques on how to succeed in school

*Develop a flexible career plan so that he/she will be prepared for the next step

*Develop and practice positive attitudes toward themselves, others, school and work.

This information from staff, along with interviews with parents and students, verify that these are areas of need for adolescents.

Providing access to students into programs

A major concern at Metropolitan is providing information to students in home schools about the career opportunities available. Since all students are transported from their home schools, enrollment and recruitment is a major

challenge to staff. Metropolitan is dependent upon the home schools to provide time for staff to speak with students and distribute recruiting information.

The project focused significant time and attention to recruiting students. Some of the most effective techniques utilized during the three years are outlined below.

Admission and Enrollment procedures. The recruiting process is the business of everyone on staff at Metropolitan. Each staff member has an important job to do to insure that students are aware of the opportunities available to them and that the experience students have at Metropolitan is a positive one. In order to identify task and procedures that must be completed, the entire process was reviewed and refined during the project. A final procedural document was produced in the spring of 1991. The complete document on the Metropolitan Application and Enrollment Procedures is provided in the Appendix on pages A 2-4.

Field trips. Field trips for all district eighth grade students enrolled in Career Orientation, a required semester course that builds career awareness and explores career options. During the course of the project more than 7,000 students have toured the facility, more than 2,500 students during the 1990-91 school year.

Marketing plan. Development of a marketing plan for Metropolitan designed to increase awareness, educate parents and the business community about the programming available and improve the school's image. This plan was developed through the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce and Vogel/Sysco Foods, Inc., Metropolitan's Partners in Education. In addition, the district's Vocational Advisory Council and Metropolitan advisory committees assisted in this effort. Results of this marketing plan has been an increase of 6% in student enrollment and raising $5,000 in monies to be used for public relations purposes. See the Appendix, pages A 5-7 for a copy of the marketing plan.

Advertising campaign. It was decided to focus on three distinct audiences during the project: students, parents, and home school staff. Positive selling points were developed and utilized in all materials developed. See Appendix, pages A 8-9.

Some of the most beneficial results of the advertising campaign are described below.

Students

*All students eligible to attend Metropolitan receive a brochure distributed at each school outlining the benefits of enrolling.

*Metropolitan staff and students make presentations in each home school during the second and third nine weeks of school, prior to spring registration. Whenever possible, these presentations are made in individual classrooms.

*When an application is received, the Metropolitan teacher contacts the student. If possible, the student makes a visit to Metropolitan to meet the teacher prior to enrollment.

*The Associate Director of Vocational Education, the school's principal, sends out information to each student at least twice during the summer along with a letter of congratulations for choosing Metropolitan.

*When teachers arrive for the new school year, they contact students to confirm that they are still planning to enroll.

*Extended day classes are promoted at the beginning of the year as well as at semester since these are additional classes offered after the end of the regular school day.

*Colorful printed posters advertising Metropolitan are placed in high traffic areas where teenagers are likely to visit; e.g., fast food locations, shopping malls, grocery stores. The posters suggest the student call the Metropolitan counselor for more information or contact their own school counselor.

Parents

*Parents in feeder schools with children eligible to attend Metropolitan receive a letter and brochure describing the vocational programs available prior to Spring Registration.

*Metropolitan staff presents programs at home school Open Houses and Parent Teacher Student Association meetings.

*Advertising in the newspaper is done on a limited basis as funds allow.

*Articles about successful students are sent to local newspapers to promote Metropolitan programs.

*Parents are encouraged to visit Metropolitan. Tours are conducted on request daily from 7:30 am-9:00 pm.

*An annual Open House is planned around other activities that will likely encourage large crowds. The latest successful open house was conducted with a computer seminar and equipment display. Dealers set up their latest equipment and computers in the building and scheduled a number of seminars. In addition, students were available to conduct tours of the different program areas. Demonstrations and displays were utilized in every laboratory and shop.

Home School Staff

*The Metropolitan counselor schedules regular visits with home school counselors and administrators to share information and answer questions.

*Members of the district's Vocational Advisory Council schedule programs at the home schools to promote the importance of vocational skills. They speak from the standpoint of the employer.

*Metropolitan scheduled counselor tours to industry sites which employ vocational students. Members of the Vocational Advisory Council conducted the tours, pointing out the need for motivated, well trained workers.

*Metropolitan teachers make classroom visits to home school programs which serve as feeders; e.g., art classes for Commercial Art/Computer Graphics, mechanical drawing classes for Computer Aided Drafting and home economics classes for Commercial Foods. Students who are enrolled at that particular home school are often sent as representatives of students at Metropolitan. These presentations build rapport and understanding between teachers.

*Metropolitan staff regularly send information to home school staff about student attendance, achievement and progress in class. The positive progress of students is emphasized.

Vocational and Career Planning emphasized

Some of the positive results of emphasizing vocational and career planning are briefly described below.

*The Guidance Office was moved to a more accessible location across from the Main Office. There is an outside door with a sign welcoming students, staff, parents and visitors. Walk-in traffic has increased 200% since the move was made in late December 1990. The facility includes a reception area with couches for informal meetings, a private office with telephone, desk and comfortable chairs and a group procedures/testing room for small groups.

*Direct services to students have been dramatically increased. Administrative support has made it possible for the counselor to increase time spent in direct services to students from 76% to 95%. The counselor is able to use the actual time students are in the building for guidance and counseling services. Activities include individual counseling, guidance activities, group counseling, testing and assessment, teaching and off - campus activities with students.

*Developmental guidance activities have been stressed. A number of guidance activities has been planned during the project to promote positive personal growth and development in students. Some of the more successful activities have been: Suicide Prevention Workshops, Youth Accident Prevention Program, Crisis Intervention Programs, Getting Smarter Seminars, Test Taking Skills, How to Get a Summer Job, How to Get Financial Aid, programs for single parents, and Postsecondary Educational Opportunities--presentations by colleges, vo-tech, private schools and the military. These activities are scheduled at appropriate times during the school year to build student awareness and knowledge of opportunities available to them.

*Handicapped students receive specialized guidance and counseling services to insure that modifications are appropriate to meet their needs. The vocational component of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed with the assistance of the home school counselor and resource teacher(s), parents, student, vocational teacher, and Metropolitan evaluator and counselor.

*Through the cooperative efforts of the JTPA Coordinator, Vocational Evaluator/Coordinator, Basic Skills Teacher, the school nurse, the Coordinator of Student Services and the counselor, effective career development and transition planning has been accomplished. Each student is given a reading and math test at the beginning of the school year. If the student scores below the 25th percentile, an Individualized Written Vocational Program (IWVP) is developed. Student needs are identified and interventions and modifications are planned with the

assistance of the teacher to insure that the student will meet with success.

*Vocational evaluation services are available to special needs students. In addition, students who are unsure about career plans or who are having difficulty in class are given a vocational evaluation based on their needs. The SAGE/Compute-a-Match system is utilized along with the CITES Learning Styles and other instruments.

*A career development plan is developed for each student and reviewed each year by parents, counselor and student. This plan is begun in the eighth grade during the Career Orientation class and is modified each year as students make choices of courses.

*Students who have difficulty succeeding in a Metropolitan program receive regular instructional support from the counselor, evaluator and Basic Skills teacher. Students are monitored a minimum of every four to five weeks to insure that programs are modified appropriately for students. Educational management team meetings are called as needed to involve home school staff, parents, students and Metropolitan staff in planning these interventions and modifications. No student is allowed to fail a class without taking appropriate steps to provide modifications of the program. The IEP or IWVP are revised as needed to insure that appropriate services are provided.

*The counselor has coordinated staff development activities for home school and Metropolitan staff designed to build awareness of the needs of students. Each year during the preschool conference a program is presented to all the district's vocational personnel. In addition, a least four times during the year, timely topics are discussed with Metropolitan staff on equity issues, needs of adolescents, teaching techniques, classroom management, learning styles and communication skills.In addition, the counselor is available to conduct staff development activities at home schools on request.

Student Data

Some of the results of student data collection that support that success of the area center counselor program are listed below.

* 90% of students attending Metropolitan feel that the school has helped them prepare for their future career.

*67% of students attending Metropolitan plan to return for a second year, 50% for another year in the same course and 17% in another course.

*Handicapped students have enrolled in all vocational programs at Metropolitan during the past three years. There is appropriate access for handicapped students.

*Nontraditional students have enrolled in all vocational programs at Metropolitan during the past three years. There is appropriate access for nontraditional students.

*Approximately 95% of Metropolitan students succeed in vocational programs. At the end of the 1989-90 school year there were 38 failures out of 730 students enrolled. Only 5% of the students made a failing grade. In the majority of cases, absences contributed to the failing grade. This is particularly important in view of the fact that one out of every five district eighth grade students failed the state mandated Minimum Performance Test of Basic Skills in the spring of 1991.

*More than 95% of handicapped students enrolled at Metropolitan complete the year. In 1989-90 the figure was 98%.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Metropolitan Area Center Counselor Program has been effective in providing supplementary vocational/career guidance and counseling services to students in central Arkansas who are eligible to attend Metropolitan. As a result of the three-year project, a number of conclusions and recommendations are listed below.

1. Administrative support is essential to the success of any guidance and counseling program. This support must extend from the building level to the local school district, to feeder schools and the Department of Education.

2. Collaboration and networking with other helping professionals, home school staff, business and community leaders, and parents is necessary to insure that guidance and counseling services are not duplicated and that appropriate referral services are available to students when needed.

3. There must be a clear understanding of the goals and purposes of the program if the program is to be successful. Duties and responsibilities must be clearly defined.

4. Target students must be identified early in the year and regular contact must be maintained. Many adolescents in need of assistance are reluctant to point out their weaknesses. Services must be provided to them before a crisis arises.

5. Public relations must be the business of everyone on the school staff. It must be emphasized continually. Students must come first. Outreach, follow through and followup activities must be assumed by every staff member. Responsibilities should be defined so that everyone knows this is a shared task.

6. Quality promotional and recruiting materials must be developed. Professionally prepared brochures, posters, and other announcements must be impressive. These materials are an excellent advertisement of the kind of quality educational experiences students can expect.

7. An area vocational center cannot rely on the feeder schools to promote programs. There must be a detailed plan to insure that feeder school staff and all eligible students are aware of the program options available.

8. Students and parents who have experienced success with programs are the best advertisement. Regardless of the promotional materials and the recruiting strategies implemented, the programs offered must be of a quality and excellence that is superior to home school offerings. Otherwise, recruiting attempts will ultimately fail.

9. Developmental guidance activities must be scheduled during the year to insure that a full range of guidance services are available.

10. Activities and procedures must be implemented in an efficient, effective way so that services to students will not end at the conclusion of the project when funding ends.

Summary

The Program Improvement Project has provided the opportunity to extend guidance services to students at Metropolitan Vocational Technical Education Center. Despite the problems identified at the beginning of the project, appropriate services have been provided to students. Perhaps the most powerful statistic is that 90% of the students feel that the school has helped them prepare for their future career. That is the goal of education. That is what we do well at Metropolitan.

XX

APPENDIX

Career Courses at Metro

DESIGN

If you are artistic and creative, sensitive to beauty, have a practical understanding of people's needs, and an ability to solve technical problems, consider DESIGN courses.

Computer-Aided Drafting
Commercial Art/Computer Graphics
Printing Technology
Residential Construction

COMMUNICATIONS

If you have good communication skills, good powers of observation, and can think clearly and logically, consider COMMUNICATIONS courses.

Computer Programming
Computerized Word Processing
Radio Broadcasting
Television Production

MECHANICS & REPAIRERS

If you have mechanical aptitude and enjoy working with your hands using tools and equipment, are challenged to solve mechanical puzzles, can master complex devices, and are willing to continually upgrade your skills and knowledge as technology changes, consider MECHANICS and REPAIRERS courses.

Air Conditioning and Heating Technology
Auto Body and Paint Technology
Automotive Technology
Computer Repair Technology
Electronics
Machine Technology
Metal Fabrication/Welding

SERVICE PROVIDER

If you can deal effectively with people, understand people and human nature, perform well under pressure, enjoy good health and stamina, and have managerial and organizational ability to plan activities, consider SERVICE PROVIDER courses.

Cashier/Checker (includes sales, marketing and merchandising)
Commercial Foods
Cosmetology
Health Occupations Education

Metropolitan Application & Enrollment Procedures 1991-1992

These procedures for applications and enrollment will be followed for the 1991-1992 school year. Responsibilities and time lines have been identified below.

1. Associate Director.
   * Will keep all Metropolitan classes open until after the beginning of the school year. In no case will a student be denied the opportunity to submit an application for a course. After students arrive and actual enrollment figures are determined, some classes may be closed and scheduling changes made.
   * Will determine when a student's second choice assignment is to be made.
   * Will monitor process every two weeks to insure that implementation is completed as outlined.
   * Will present a positive image of Metropolitan and encourage enrollment into Metropolitan courses.

2. VSN Counselor.
   * Will coordinate recruiting activities by distributing applications and other information, scheduling and presenting programs at each feeder school and coordinating tours of Metropolitan.
   * Will assist with mailing of recruitment information to parents and students.
   * Will present a positive image of Metropolitan and encourage enrollment into Metropolitan courses.

3. Student Services Coordinator.
   * Will approve placement decisions and resolve scheduling problems.
   * Will present a positive image of Metropolitan and encourage enrollment into Metropolitan courses.

4. Metropolitan Secretary.
   * Will present a positive image of Metropolitan when routing telephone calls and welcoming students and parents.
   * Will receive and date all applications as received.
   * Will duplicate "IEP required" applications for the VSN Evaluator/Coordinator.
   * Will distribute the applications to the Attendance Secretary when processed.

5. Attendance Secretary.
   * Will present a positive image of Metropolitan in dealing with students, parents and home school staff.
   * Will enter date received and information from each application on the computer within two days of receiving the application.
   *Will file the applications in folders by course.

*Will update computer with information received from Student Assignment Office, teachers or other sources every two weeks prior to the distribution of printouts.

*Will distribute printouts of applicants every two weeks beginning March 1 to:

. Teachers-list of applicants for their course
. Associate Director, Student Services Coordinator and Counselor-list of all applicants and course selected
. Sending school-list of their students and course selected
. Student Assignment Office-list of LRSD students to verify home school assignment.

6. Teachers.

* Will present a positive image of Metropolitan and encourage enrollment into Metropolitan courses.

* Will check the application folders regularly for new applications. Teachers will assume full responsibility for applications which are removed from the office and will make them available for review as requested.

* Will contact each applicant within two weeks. Contacts will be made through scheduled interviews or phone conferences. If this is not possible, contact may be made by mail.

* Will review a printout of their applicants every two weeks to insure its accuracy as known.

* Will keep a contact list and provide a copy to the Associate Director every two weeks beginning March 15 or as requested. A copy of the printout may be used as a contact list.

* Will inform the Attendance Secretary of any changes in applicant status as a result of teacher contact so that changes can be made on the computer.

* Will determine that each applicant is appropriately placed in the course. Considerations will include prerequisities, safety and ability to benefit from the course. Written teacher recommendations for course changes will be given to the Metropolitan counselor.

6. Metropolitan Counselor.

*Will present a positive image of Metropolitan and promote enrollment into Metropolitan courses.

* Will provide information and guidance services to prospective students and parents as requested.

* Will coordinate course changes through teachers, parents and home school counselors. All changes will be approved by the Student Services Coordinator and/or the Associate Director.

* Will share information about students with teachers and support staff when appropriate.

* Will review the printout of applicants every two weeks to insure its accuracy as known.

* Will deliver printouts to counselors and verify applicants.

7. VSN Evaluator/Coordinator.

* Will present a positive image of Metropolitan and encourage enrollment into Metropolitan courses.

* Will process "IEP required" applications through the sending school counselor to insure that approriate information is available for the development of the vocational component of the IEP.

* Will share educational information about students with teachers and counselor.

2/15/91

Metro Task Force Marketing Plan 1990-91

Metropolitan Vocational-Technical Education Center

Partners in Education with Greater LR Chamber of Commerce and Vogel/Sysco Foods, Inc.

adopted June 21,1990

Goals of Metro Task Force

(1) Increase awareness of Metropolitan

(2) Educate parents and the business community about the excellence of programs available to students

(3) Improve the image of Metropolitan.

Objective

To increase Metropolitan student enrollment to 1,000 by fall 1991, representing a 25% increase over 1989-1990.

A Picture of the Market

To increase enrollment students are needed from all eligible schools, public and private, in the four-county service area (Grant, Lonoke, Pulaski and Saline counties). Approximately 500 students should be enrolled from the Little Rock School District, representing 8% of the students in grades 10-12 eligible to attend Metropolitan. Approximately 500 students should be enrolled from the surrounding school districts.

Position

Metropolitan programs offer high school students and interested adults a quality educational experience that results in:

(1) Job prep training to make people competitive in the labor market

(2) College prep training that prepares people to use theory in solving practical problems faced daily by professional in business and industry

(3) Exploration and identification of future career choices suited to individual needs, interests and abilities.

Target Audience

(1) Parents with children in grades 8-11 in both public and private schools in the central Arkansas area.

(2) Business community utilizing the following resources:

Chambers of Commerce in four-county area

Employment Security Division/Temporary employment agencies

Labor Unions, Apprenticeship programs, Professional organizations

Chambers of Commerce in four-county area

Civic groups in four-county area

Department of Human Resources

Churches, church organizations

School boards in four-county area

Vocational Advisory Council/committee members.

Phase One Implementation Plan

Fund Raising. Complete one major activity in early fall 1990 (September/October) with a goal of $5,000 to be used for public relations activities. A Dr. Ruth Steele Roast and Silent Auction is scheduled.

Public Relations. Complete one major public relations campaign in winter 1990 (December/January). The campaign will focus on "Give your child the gift for a lifetime: a skill" scheduled during the holiday season. The campaign will include the following:

*Billboards

*Radio spots (adult-oriented radio stations)

*TV spots (aimed at adult audiences)

*Newspaper ads, Press releases

*Direct mail to parents in four-county area and businesses in central Arkansas (contains cover letter, brochure, request for additional information). Packets containing brochures/posters sent to selected agencies/businesses with lobbies (car dealerships, doctor offices, Dept of Human Services)

*Guest appearances on local talk radio/TV shows; meetings of local organizations; churches and church groups; PTA groups

*Presentations at school board meetings in central Arkansas

*Posters in businesses and public places throughout central Arkansas.

Budget (estimated)

Printing costs	$ 300.00
Radio/TV spots	$ 2,700.00
Newspaper ads	$ 1,000.00
Billboards	$ 1,000.00
	$ 5,000.00

Future Plans

When the Phase One Implementation Plan is completed and evaluated, a long-range plan will be developed for 1991 and beyond.

METROPOLITAN VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER

POSITIVE SELLING POINTS

1. Earn credit at no cost to you. Extended day classes are available after school. Save the tuition cost of summer classes if you need an additional credit.

2. Transportation provided at no cost to you. Transportation for extended day for Little Rock School District students.

3. Qualified, experienced teachers who have background in business and industry as well as appropriate education/training.

4. Pre-test a career interest before you invest thousands of dollars in college.

5. Hands on, active learning places students at the center of the classroom experience. Students do things, not just see them or read about them.

6. Advisory committees bring business and industry leaders into the building, to see what is being taught and make recommendations. These leaders often employ Metropolitan students.

7. Practical skills are learned that can be useful at school and home; i.e., research papers, desktop publishing, auto maintenance and repair, carpentry, creative writing and computer graphics and drafting.

8. Meet interesting people from other schools in the central Arkansas area (from Pulaski, Grant, Lonoke and Saline counties) who attend public and private schools. Adults also attend classes.

9. Non-traditional courses broaden the possibilities for finding a rewarding, satisfying career.

10. College prep opportunities as students solve challenging problems professional face every day on the

job. Apply the theory from academic classes in a technical setting that requires students to think and grow academically and mentally.. Example: use communications skills in TV Production, Radio Broadcasting and Word Processing.

11. Job prep opportunities to get better jobs as students learn techniques, operate equipment and develop work habits that are demanded by employers. Students may get a better parttime job now and work their way through college after high school. Employers are more willing to hire those who already know procedures, techniques and machine operation.

12. Relaxed setting that gives you a longer period of time to learn, smaller classes where individual help is available, and a team approach where students help one another makes learning easier.

13. Clubs that stress personal growth and leadership. Emphasis is placed on gaining self confidence through activities and contests.

14. Well-equipped classrooms, labs and shops with state of the art equipment. Students learn in a realistic work setting.

15. Feeling of accomplishment and pride in workmanship is a major benefit of Metro's programs. Students often have the chance to dream and visualize an idea, develop that idea and then produce it. It is a satisfying feeling to see and appreciate what you are learning. Emphasis is placed on quality work that is completed with speed and accuracy.